

INSPECTION REPORT

Southwark LEA

13 February 2004



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and Jobcentre Plus programmes. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learnirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

Overall judgement

Where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, **or**
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory.

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

INSPECTION REPORT

Southwark LEA

Contents

Summary

Description of the provider	1
Scope of provision	1
About the inspection	4
Overall judgement	4
Grades	4
Key findings	5
What learners like about Southwark LEA	11
What learners think Southwark LEA could improve	11
Key challenges for Southwark LEA	12

Detailed inspection findings

Leadership and management	16
Equality of opportunity	17
Quality assurance	19
Information & communications technology	21
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	23
Visual & performing arts & media	26
Foundation programmes	29

INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Adult and community learning in the London Borough of Southwark (LBS) is funded by the Central London Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and is part of the portfolio of LBS's director of education and culture. The head of libraries and lifelong learning has overall responsibility for the programme and reports to the director of education and culture. The day-to-day management of this provision is carried out by the adult education manager who is supported by three full-time and two part-time programme managers and four other managers. LSC funding also supports LBS's adult advice and guidance service, based in the main library and at outreach centres. The manager of this service also reports to the head of libraries and lifelong learning. The delivery of programmes in family literacy, numeracy and language skills is subcontracted to a charitable trust involved in the development of literacy in primary education. Neighbourhood renewal funding supports a community project which is also subcontracted. Additionally, LBS currently funds a charitable organisation to support the development of a network of the borough's learning providers, and to publicise learning opportunities throughout the borough.

2. LBS's adult learning plan and strategic plans are developed by the head of libraries and lifelong learning, in collaboration with managers in the education and culture department. These plans include the development of adult and community projects in partnership with other departments in the local education authority (LEA) and other external agencies.

3. Southwark is an area of high deprivation. Seventy per cent of its population live in wards which are among the most deprived 10 per cent in the country. Southwark's unemployment rate in January 2004 was 5.6 per cent, compared with 4.6 per cent for Inner London and 2.5 per cent for England as a whole. Twenty-seven per cent of the borough's residents have poor literacy and numeracy skills, according to the Basic Skills Agency. Thirty-seven per cent of the population of Southwark are from minority ethnic groups, according to the national census of 2001.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Information & communications technology

4. LBS currently offers 19 courses in information and communications technology (ICT) with 151 enrolled learners. Seventy per cent of learners are female and 63 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. Twenty-four per cent are aged 60 or over. Twelve courses are based at LBS's main learning centre. All but one of these are externally accredited computer literacy courses, and some are intended for complete beginners. These courses run for 12 weeks during term time and consist of one two-and-a-half hour class a week. LBS offers an examination-based qualification in information technology (IT), with one four-hour class each week. Most of the remaining, non-accredited provision is based in two

SOUTHWARK LEA

libraries. These classes are all aimed at beginners and run for eight weeks. Another non-accredited class is provided for a client at the client's premises. Courses run in the daytime and on weekdays only. A UK online centre at the main centre, staffed by regular tutors, is available for independent learning at certain times. LBS has seven part-time ICT tutors, managed by a full-time co-ordinator.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

5. LBS currently provides 25 non-accredited health and fitness-related courses and two cookery courses, one of which is for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. Fitness courses include keep fit, aquafit, pilates, and chair exercise. Two courses are aimed at family learners and 12 courses are for those aged 50 and over, with one programme specifically for those with medical or health problems. Courses are offered at 16 venues including LEA centres and other partners' accommodation, such as sports facilities, day centres, residential homes, and family and community centres across the area. Most courses recruit annually and run for 36 weeks. To date this year, there have been 435 enrolments by 380 learners, 70 per cent of whom attracted concessionary fees. Forty-seven per cent of learners are from minority ethnic groups. Nine per cent of learners are men. Twenty-three per cent have a disability. Most classes are mixed ability. A recently appointed part-time curriculum manager reports to the adult education manager and is responsible for curriculum and budgetary management and quality assurance. The curriculum manager also teaches on one programme. LBS currently has eight part-time tutors, most of whom have a recognised teaching qualification.

Visual & performing arts & media

6. LBS currently provides 34 visual arts courses at two main sites and 14 community-based locations throughout the borough. From September 2003 to the time of the inspection, there have been 406 enrolments by 287 learners. Fifty-four per cent of learners are over 55 years of age. Eighty per cent are women, and 35 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. Teaching is carried out by 14 part-time tutors who are supported by three technicians. A full-time co-ordinator manages the programme. Courses cover a range of visual arts and crafts including pottery, wood crafts, art, clothes making, millinery, upholstery and life drawing. All classes are offered during the day on weekdays. Most classes are between two and four hours long and run over five, 10 or 12 weeks. These are repeated three times a year. However, a few courses run for one or two days a week over 36 weeks. Ninety-one per cent of the courses are non-accredited with the remainder leading to nationally recognised qualifications. Many classes are for learners of mixed ability although some are offered specifically for beginners, intermediate or advanced learners. Some sites offer childcare provision and after-school clubs.

Foundation programmes

7. Twelve foundation courses are provided in the main centre under the skills for life, the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language. They include four literacy and three numeracy courses from pre-entry to entry levels 3 and 4, and courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) from pre-entry to level 1. All courses run during the day in two-hour blocks, for one to three days a week over 36 weeks. A total of 123 learners are currently enrolled on externally accredited programmes. This includes 51 learners sharing 16 different first languages on ESOL courses, 46 on literacy courses and 26 on numeracy courses. Two hundred and five learners followed programmes during 2002-03. All learners receive literacy, numeracy and language skills assessments when entering their vocational programmes. Ten learners with literacy, numeracy or language skills support needs currently receive learning support for their vocational courses, which include mathematics level 3, childcare and ICT. A full-time co-ordinator manages the programme supported by one full-time and two part-time tutors and two part-time agency staff.

8. LBS offers 14 classes at community centres for learners with additional learning difficulties and disabilities. It offers a further four classes for joint parent/child activities, which include courses in arts and crafts, health and fitness and social care. Currently, 124 adults and 16 children are enrolled on non-accredited provision. Teaching is shared by 12 part-time tutors.

9. LBS currently offers nine family literacy, language and numeracy courses in primary schools in Southwark. This is distinct subcontracted provision offered by a charitable organisation which specialises in primary school literacy development. Sixty-three parents are currently enrolled on courses for the Spring term. The parents attend morning sessions which focus on literacy numeracy or language skills linked to the adult and school national curricula. Sixty-one children attend joint afternoon activities. The provision is managed by one curriculum manager and delivered by five tutors employed on a freelance consultancy basis. All adult learners have the opportunity to submit portfolios for Open College Learning accreditation at level 1 in calculations, reading, writing and speaking and listening.

10. Most community learning is currently part of a television project. This project is designed to encourage a range of local organisations, such as community centres, to develop their members' media skills in video making and website production. Nine community organisations are currently partners in the project. Accurate data about the number of learners on the project is not available.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	11
Number of inspection days	55
Number of learner interviews	195
Number of staff interviews	58
Number of subcontractor interviews	5
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	34
Number of partner/external agency interviews	13

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

11. The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, LBS's leadership and management, and arrangements for quality assurance are unsatisfactory. Its approach to equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The quality of learning is satisfactory in ICT; hospitality, sport, leisure and travel; visual and performing arts and media; and foundation programmes.

GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

Leadership and management	4
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	4

Information & communications technology	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

Visual & performing arts & media	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

12. Most ICT learners successfully achieve their qualifications and produce work of a satisfactory standard. **Tutors carefully monitor learners' progress and give them good feedback on their work.** Learners know what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve. Learners, with the help of their tutors, keep good records of their own progress.

13. Some ICT programmes have only a small number of learners and these learners do not always attend classes. Nearly a third of the learners leave before the end of some courses.

14. **Older learners on fitness programmes maintain and improve their levels of fitness well.** They become more flexible and more mobile, and some learners improve their memory by working through complicated routines.

15. **Learners on visual and performing arts and media programmes achieve a wide range of personal goals. Last year all learners on textile crafts courses achieved their qualification.**

16. **Learners on foundation programmes develop a range of skills which they use well in everyday life. Many ESOL learners develop the confidence to move onto courses which give them skills to progress onto vocational courses.**

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Information & communications technology	0	1	2	4	1	0	0	8
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	4	3	3	0	0	0	10
Visual & performing arts & media	0	2	6	3	0	0	0	11
Foundation programmes	0	8	6	3	2	2	0	21
Total	0	15	17	13	3	2	0	50

17. **Most teaching in fitness, art and craft and foundation programmes is good.** Tutors plan work carefully and learners work at their own pace. Many tutors give learners challenging work to help them to improve their skills. Art and craft learners are able to

apply the theories they learn to their practical work. Health and fitness learners learn how to manage their own wellbeing.

18. **The resources for learners on cabinet making programmes are very good.** Learners can use equipment of an industrial standard. Technicians give good support to learners on art and craft programmes so that they can use the facilities outside class time.

19. **Resources are poor on some foundation programmes.** Some learners working with their children on family learning programmes work in rooms which are too small. Learners find it difficult to hear clearly in some rooms which are used for practising language skills. Some rooms are cold.

20. Some computing equipment is good, but some ICT learners work in public areas which they find noisy and distracting. Learners studying English do not have access to computers.

21. **Recording systems on health and fitness programmes are not sufficiently developed.** Tutors use a number of different systems to screen learners' health and to record their progress. Some forms are not detailed enough and learners do not have the opportunity to set their own goals.

22. **Tutors do not record learners' progress effectively on arts and crafts courses.** They use checklists to record the skills that learners have achieved, but not all learners have the opportunity to comment on their own progress.

23. **Assessment and monitoring processes are inadequate on some foundation programmes.** Learners in family literacy, numeracy and language programmes and on community projects do not have their skills tested at the beginning of their course. Tutors do not keep a written assessment of their progress. Tutors record the progress of learners well in some skills for life classes, and learners understand what they have achieved. However, tutors in some classes do not do this thoroughly enough.

24. **The range of courses in the adult learning programme is not wide enough.** Only two evening classes are offered and no weekend classes. No drama or music courses are provided and the media course is only available to a few learners. Most learners in health and fitness classes are over 55 and many cannot progress, as very few more advanced programmes are still provided.

25. **The range of foundation programmes provided does not meet learners' needs.** Learners on family literacy, numeracy and language classes can only take qualifications at level 1, a level which is too high for many of them. However, no level 2 qualifications are offered for learners in skills for life classes who want to progress.

26. Tutors assess ICT and foundation learners' language and numeracy skills very well. They give learners good support to develop their skills and to help them to understand their progress.

27. **Tutors in accredited art and craft classes do not integrate literacy, numeracy and language development sufficiently into learning activities.** Learners have their literacy, numeracy and language skills tested but they do not have the opportunity to develop these skills as part of their course. Tutors on non-accredited programmes do not test learners at the beginning of their course or plan activities to improve these skills.

28. **LBS's student services staff support skills for life learners well.** Student services staff visit learners on their induction programme and encourage them to use the service. Learners interviewed appreciate the support they receive.

Leadership and management

29. ICT tutors review their courses very thoroughly. They meet regularly to share information and good practice. Tutors ask learners for their views about their courses and make changes as a result.

30. **Some areas of the health and fitness programme are poorly managed.** Some equipment is not securely stored or regularly tested. Some accommodation is not regularly monitored and some staff have not had opportunities to update their skills. Some classes have few learners and others have waiting lists. Information about courses is not always clear or accurate. A new manager is developing new systems.

31. **The community learning project is very poorly managed and LBS does not have any systems in place to assure its quality.** The partners in the project do not meet to share ideas, resources or good practice. The inspectors could find no accurate information about the learners on the programme.

32. **LBS has a clear strategic vision to meet local priorities.** It has a clear strategic plan which describes the needs of those who live in the borough and an adult education plan which identifies how the service will provide learning for priority groups. LBS is working with a range of partners to deliver an effective programme to these groups.

33. **LBS's adult learning service monitors the quality of teaching and learning well to improve provision.** Managers observe tutors and give them thorough and helpful feedback about the teaching and learning in their classes. Teaching and learning has improved.

34. **LBS works effectively with partners to encourage a wider range of learners to come to classes.** Many learners do not pay fees for their course and take their children to a crèche, which is free. Special programmes are offered for parents and for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. LBS achieves its targets for many difficult-to-reach learners.

35. **Communication in LBS and between LBS and its partners is not always effective.** Staff do not attend formal meetings with other departments and LBS has no systems to keep staff informed about what is happening across adult learning. Good practice is not regularly shared. Staff in the adult education department cannot access LBS's intranet.

36. **LBS does not co-ordinate the whole of the provision well.** Departments do not have service level agreements with each other and contracts with partners do not always have clearly structured outcomes. LBS does not have a marketing strategy for the whole provision. It has no accurate data with which to analyse the costs of all areas of the provision. LBS does not have a strategy for developing learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills. It has no framework for skills development for areas of learning and partners to use.

37. **LBS does not have effective systems for quality assurance.** It does not yet have a framework which it applies to all of its provision, and it does not check the quality assurance of its subcontractors. The position of quality manager for the directly managed provision is currently vacant.

38. **The self-assessment process is not used adequately to reflect on and improve learning,** and many staff members are not involved in the process. Data are not yet analysed sufficiently to monitor and plan improvements. However, the self-assessment reports do identify many of the weaknesses identified by the inspectors.

39. **LBS does not monitor the equal opportunities policies of its subcontractors sufficiently.** It does not offer its policy to subcontractors which do not have one of their own. LBS currently does not ensure that subcontractors' accommodation meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. LBS does not monitor the retention and achievement rates of different groups of learners.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- clear strategic vision to meet local priorities
- very effective action to improve teaching and learning in directly managed provision
- particularly successful action to widen participation

Weaknesses

- ineffective communication
- poor co-ordination of learning across the provision
- inadequate arrangements for quality assurance
- insufficient use of self-assessment to improve provision
- insufficient monitoring of equality of opportunity

Information & communications technology

Strengths

- good feedback and monitoring of learners' progress
- particularly effective assessment and monitoring of learners' support needs
- very thorough programme review

Weaknesses

- poor recruitment and attendance on some courses
- insufficiently wide range of provision

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Strengths

- good improvement and maintenance of health and fitness levels for older learners
- good teaching and learning

Weaknesses

- insufficiently developed systems to record and monitor learners' health and progress
- insufficiently wide range of provision
- some poor curriculum management

Visual & performing arts & media

Strengths

- good achievement of personal goals
- much good teaching and learning
- very good achievement on accredited textile crafts programmes
- very good resources for cabinet making
- good technician support

Weaknesses

- insufficient integration of literacy, numeracy and language into learning activities
- insufficient recording of learners' progress on non-accredited courses
- insufficiently wide range of courses

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good development and application of skills
- good progression onto vocational courses for ESOL learners
- well-planned and challenging teaching to meet learners' needs in most sessions
- good guidance and support for skills for life learners

Weaknesses

- some poor resources
- inadequate monitoring and assessment processes
- insufficient range of learning opportunities to meet local needs
- poor management and quality assurance of community learning project

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT SOUTHWARK LEA:

- the helpful, supportive and sympathetic tutors
- 'it provides a stepping stone to independence and further training'
- the free crèche
- 'the education department is the lifeblood of the community'
- the individual tuition and working at their own pace
- 'I enjoy the social side - it lifts my mood'
- the good team work in class
- being valued by their own children while on work placements at school
- the improvement in confidence - 'to get somewhere and be someone'
- the cost of courses - they are good value for money
- the computers 'better than at my university'
- working at the right level of learning
- 'it helped improve my memory - I have to think hard to remember routines'
- 'my family are proud of my achievements'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK SOUTHWARK LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- the amount of courses and progression routes available
- the amount of ICT use in ESOL programmes
- the number of levels of ESOL programmes
- the canteen facilities
- the provision of classes in half terms and holidays to maintain fitness
- facilities in the swimming pools - the changing rooms are cold and there are no hairdryers
- the length of the waiting lists
- the range of learning materials available - there is too much reliance on worksheets
- the amount of formal tests and revision work
- the amount of audiovisual aids to practise speaking and listening
- the reliability of the lifts
- the crèche opening hours - 'the crèche doesn't open until 10 o'clock. This means we always arrive at lessons late.'

KEY CHALLENGES FOR SOUTHWARK LEA:

- develop quality assurance systems across the provision
- develop a literacy, numeracy and language skills strategy
- implement the equal opportunities plans
- review and develop the curriculum to meet changing local needs
- improve the co-ordination of the whole learning programme
- improve initial assessment and the recording of learning
- improve resources and their management
- develop opportunities to share good practice

Language of the Adult and Community Learning Sector

Terminology varies across the range of education and training settings covered by the *Common Inspection Framework*. The table below indicates the terms appropriate to Adult and Community Learning

Single term used in the framework	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning	
Provider	Provider	Any organisation providing opportunities for adults to meet personal or collective goals through the experience of learning. Providers include local authorities, specialist designated institutions, voluntary and community sector organisations, regeneration partnerships and further education colleges
Learner	Learner	Includes those learning by participating in community projects, as well as those on courses. Learning, however, will be planned, with intended outcomes.
Teacher / trainer	Tutor	Person teaching adult learners or guiding or facilitating their learning.
	Mentor	Person providing individual, additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them achieve their learning goals.
Learning goals	Main learning goals	Intended gains in skills, knowledge or understanding. Gains may be reflected in the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications. Or they may be reflected in the ability of learners to apply learning in contexts outside the learning situation, e.g. in the family, community, or workplace. Learners' main goal/s should be recorded on an individual or, in some cases, group learning plan. Plans should be revised as progress is made and new goals emerge.
	Secondary learning goals	These may include planned-for gains in self-confidence, and inter-personal skills. These should also be included in learning plans where appropriate.
Personal and learning skills	Personal and learning skills	These include being able to study independently, willingness to collaborate with others, and readiness to take up another opportunity for education or training.

Other terms used in Adult and Community Learning

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Unanticipated, or unintended learning outcome	Adults often experience unanticipated gains as a result of being involved in learning. These include improved self-esteem, greater self-confidence and a growing sense of belonging to a community. Gains of this kind should be acknowledged and recorded in any record of achievement.
Subject-based programme	A programme organised around a body of knowledge, e.g. the structure and usage of the French language or ceramic glazing techniques. Students could be expected to progress from one aspect of the subject to another, to grasp increasingly complex concepts or analyses or to develop greater levels of skill or to apply skills to a new area of work.
Issue-based programme	A programme that is based on the concerns, interests and aspirations of particular groups, for example members of a Sikh Gurdwara wanting to address inter-faith relations in their town, or parents worried about the incidence of drug abuse in their locality. Issue-based learning tends to be associated with geographically defined communities, but the increasing use of electronic means of communication means that this need no longer be the case. Progress is defined in terms of the group's increasing ability to analyse its situation, to access new information and skills which will help it resolve its difficulties and generate solutions and its growing confidence in dealing with others to implement those solutions.
Outreach provision	Provision established in a community setting in addition to provision made at an organisation's main site(s). Outreach programmes may be similar to courses at the main site(s) or be designed to meet the specific requirements of that community.
Neighbourhood-based work	The provider's staff have a long-term presence in a local community with a specific remit to understand the concerns of the local residents and develop learning activities to meet local needs and interests.
Community regeneration	The process of improving the quality of life in communities by investing in their infrastructure and facilities, creating opportunities for training and employment and tackling poor health and educational under-achievement. Community regeneration requires the active participation of local residents in decision-making. Changes and improvements are often achieved either directly or indirectly as a result of the adult learning activities which arise from this.

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Community capacity building	The process of enabling local people to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to take advantage of opportunities for employment, training and further education and to become selfmanaging, sustainable communities.
Active citizenship	The process whereby people recognise the power they have to improve the quality of life for others and make a conscious effort to do so: the process whereby people recognise the power of organisations and institutions to act in the interests of the common good and exercise their influence to ensure that they do so. Adult learning contributes to active citizenship.

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- clear strategic vision to meet local priorities
- very effective action to improve teaching and learning in directly managed provision
- particularly successful action to widen participation

Weaknesses

- ineffective communication
- poor co-ordination of learning across the provision
- inadequate arrangements for quality assurance
- insufficient use of self-assessment to improve provision
- insufficient monitoring of equality of opportunity

40. LBS has a clearly defined strategic vision for adult and community learning. It focuses on local matters to ensure that adults with the greatest learning need are given priority. It requires every service department's plan to state how it will enable LBS to meet these key priorities. The borough's libraries and adult learning service has produced a detailed three-year development plan which clearly demonstrates how it will work towards the achievement of local priorities and which is closely linked to other departments' strategic plans. The strategic direction in the education and culture department is clear. LBS has an adult education programme designed to meet the needs of particular groups and a very effective adult advice and guidance service. Senior staff in the department have recognised that the plan's objectives cannot all be immediately met with the LEA's resources. LBS has investigated alternative approaches through the review of other adult learning provision in London and through research projects based on the needs of Southwark residents. Subcontractors are delivering family learning and literacy programmes and community-based projects. LBS is working with a specialist learning information charity to establish an effective network of adult education providers. This has led to the production of a comprehensive database of all learning and training provision in the borough. This is available through a website, on a CD-ROM and as a wall chart in the form of a map. LBS has subcontracted the management of the provider network in the borough to its partner, which produces a regular newsletter for its members.

41. Staff training and development are satisfactory. All staff have a performance review in line with LBS's procedures. During this review, some performance targets are set and a staff development plan is produced. These plans have ensured recently that all tutors have teaching qualifications. Generally, staff development plans are not detailed enough. Priority areas, such as equal opportunities training, are not dealt with quickly

enough. Staff do not have enough opportunities for professional updating of their occupational skills and qualifications.

42. Although LBS is building an external network of providers and partners, internal communication across its adult and community learning provision has been ineffective. Staff at all levels have not been kept adequately informed of changes and developments. Some of the project work carried out by subcontractors to assist communication is not yet fully operational and few clear results have yet been seen. No formal meeting structure has been defined. The managers of the main business units in LBS and those in the subcontractors have no formal way of communicating with each other, and operate in isolation. Some work is duplicated and good practice is not shared. Middle managers do not hold enough meetings between themselves or with those for whom they are responsible. Meetings that do take place are not routinely minuted. Staff in the adult education department cannot access LBS's intranet.

43. Learning is poorly co-ordinated across the provision. The department of education and culture has a number of business service units, but has no formal service level agreements within the department or with other departments. Some of the subcontractors do not have sufficiently detailed contracts. Within these contracts, roles and responsibilities and reporting structures are not clear. The agreements are poorly structured and accountability is not adequately defined. The monitoring of the subcontracted provision is poor. The marketing of the whole provision is inadequate. Although work is underway to market all adult learning and training across the borough, LBS does not have a comprehensive marketing strategy for the provision it funds. Many classes have low numbers and the range of provision is narrow in all curriculum areas. Progression routes are few and insufficient development has taken place in the curriculum. Very few classes take place in the evenings or at weekends, and many potential learners have poor access to the provision.

44. LBS has not developed a literacy, numeracy and language skills strategy to ensure consistent delivery across the provision and does not have a formal procedure to ensure that additional support is provided to all learners who would benefit from it.

45. LBS has not carried out a detailed financial analysis of the provision it delivers. Data are not available to ensure that all of the provision provides value for money. Some classes observed were small and LBS has not analysed the cost of external contracts.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

46. LBS has a clear strategy to widen participation. It sets specific targets to increase the participation of priority groups including minority ethnic groups, residents with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, the unemployed and those with poor literacy and numeracy skills. LBS has worked effectively with partners to extend provision to these groups and to remove barriers to participation. Courses are free to priority groups, and fee remissions have increased from 35 per cent in 2002-03 to 88 per cent in 2003-04. The proportion of new learners on courses has also increased from 37 per cent to 50 per cent in the same period. Forty-six per cent of learners are from minority ethnic groups.

SOUTHWARK LEA

A crèche is available at one main site and is free to enrolled learners. LBS has responded to learners' feedback by lowering the age limit for entry to the crèche and has extended the provision. Learners interviewed value the crèche highly. Learners from a wide variety of backgrounds reported that adult education is very important in providing a stepping stone to increased independence and further learning.

47. LBS has developed a learning programme which has increased the participation of learners with disabilities. A newly appointed inclusive learning officer has strengthened links with specialist organisations and groups of learners. Courses in crafts, football, horticulture and learning at home have been very successful. Carers and parents report that learners benefit from increased self-confidence and communication skills. LBS has developed a database to identify potential learners, and organisations it can work with, to increase partnerships and improve participation. A subcontractor with experience in the development of literacy in primary school children delivers effective family literacy, numeracy and language programmes. These programmes attract many learners who speak English as an additional language. Learners are very motivated to develop their own and their children's literacy and language skills. Learners value accreditation and are keen to progress to more advanced courses. These courses are popular, and the demand cannot be met with current resources.

48. Men are under-represented among learners. LBS carried out a research project to identify reasons for this, and possible solutions. It has taken positive action to increase male participation, but this has had little effect so far. LBS's staffing profile reflects the ethnicity profile of the local community, but there are too few men. LBS provides a support service which gives advice and help to learners. Effective links with a borough-wide advice and guidance service support unemployed learners and other residents.

49. LBS has a satisfactory general equal opportunities policy, which it has adapted for adult education. However, the adapted policy is broad and does not include appropriate detail. Learners have a handbook which adequately outlines LBS's responsibilities relating to equality of opportunity, and gives details of the complaints procedure and learners' support services. However, it is not translated for learners who speak English as an additional language or is available as an audio version for learners with visual impairments. Learners are aware of their rights, responsibilities and the complaints procedures.

50. LBS regularly collects data related to learners' age, ethnicity, gender and disability by area of learning. LBS analyses these data and sets challenging targets for enrolment in areas of learning and in the whole provision. However, it does not monitor trends in retention and achievement in target groups. LBS does not sufficiently monitor equality of opportunity in subcontractors and partner organisations. Its policy for partnership working does not cover responsibilities related to equality of opportunity. Partners are not provided with, or asked to use, LBS's policy if they do not have their own. Although LBS has appropriate plans in place to ensure that council properties comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, it does not have formal arrangements for checking compliance in partner organisations. Some accommodation in subcontracted and partner organisations is unsuitable and does not have adequate

access for learners with restricted mobility.

51. Staff do not receive enough training in recent legislation such as the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Staff development in equality of opportunity is planned for 2003-04 but has not yet taken place. Staff in one area of learning are trained to work with different learning styles, but this has not been offered to all training staff.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

52. The quality assurance of the adult and community learning provision managed by LBS is unsatisfactory. LBS has a draft quality assurance policy which sets out the principles for action, and a draft plan which gives target dates for their implementation. However, this is a generalised document and no specific procedures are in place to support improvement in the quality of provision. LBS has a vacancy for a quality manager for its directly managed provision. Lines of responsibility for quality assurance in other sectors of the provision are not clear.

53. LBS's adult education manager has taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the directly managed provision. For the past five years, staff have rigorously carried out a well-planned lesson observation scheme. LBS has improved the system further after considering an evaluation report produced by consultants in 2001. As a result, LBS put in place training to develop team leaders' assessment skills. Grades awarded to lessons are now more realistic and the actions to improve teaching and learning are more clearly identified. Observations are moderated both internally and externally. The process is effective, and inspectors observed a lot of good teaching and few unsatisfactory lessons. All staff have thorough annual appraisals with clear targets that are monitored and updated at regular intervals during the year. Retention has improved on many courses following the introduction of a 'learner buddies' scheme. Each curriculum team has a 'buddy' staff member who follows up absences and maintains contact with learners.

54. Arrangements for quality assurance of the provision as a whole are inadequate. LBS's service level agreements with its subcontractors are weak and do not specify clear requirements for the quality of provision. No common quality assurance framework exists to enable monitoring to take place, and the quality of learning in subcontractors is not checked. The adult learning provision is poorly co-ordinated and good practice is not shared routinely between or within departments or subcontractors. Target-setting and planning for individual learning is weak. Not enough non-accredited courses have systems to record and monitor learners' progress. LBS has identified many of these factors and has plans in place to deal with them. Some actions have already been taken, but they have not yet had any effect.

55. LBS does not use the self-assessment process adequately to improve provision. Staff are not routinely involved in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of their area of learning. The process is not co-ordinated across the provision and LBS does not have a complete view of the quality and effectiveness of adult and community learning in the borough. LBS has used a new management information system to monitor some key

SOUTHWARK LEA

strategic indicators, but the system is not yet sufficiently established. Data are not recorded or analysed in sufficient depth or detail to enable significant improvements to be made to the learning process. LBS does not adequately plan how to meet key performance indicators across the provision. However, many of the weaknesses identified by inspectors were identified in the self-assessment reports.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Information & communications technology

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	151	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good feedback and monitoring of learners' progress
- particularly effective assessment and monitoring of learners' support needs
- very thorough programme review

Weaknesses

- poor recruitment and attendance on some courses
- insufficiently wide range of provision

Achievement and standards

56. Most ICT learners successfully achieve their qualifications and the standard of their work and their progress is satisfactory. Learners also achieve a wide range of personal targets. Some, for example, want to improve their performance at work, while others are looking for a new job. Some learners say they want to keep up with their children and one learner has started to teach her husband how to use their home computer. However, recruitment, attendance and retention are poor on some courses. Only 50 per cent of short courses retain all learners. In 14 per cent of classes, over 30 per cent of learners leave early. Attendance and punctuality were poor in some observed sessions. Recruitment targets are set very low for some courses and these are still not met. Courses are allowed to run even if they fail to meet targets, and some have very few learners.

Quality of education and training

57. The feedback on and monitoring of learners' progress is good. Tutors give learners regular written and verbal feedback on classroom activities. The feedback to learners encourages and supports their learning, but it is realistic and makes their strengths and weaknesses clear. Learners appreciate the time that tutors give to supporting them as individuals. Learners keep their work safely and, with their tutors' assistance, carefully record their progress week by week.

58. The assessment and monitoring of learners' support needs are particularly effective. All new learners are interviewed and those who need it are given a literacy, numeracy

SOUTHWARK LEA

and language skills assessment by specialist staff. Tutors use evidence of previous attainment effectively to place learners on an appropriate course. Tutors identify learners' individual support needs and agree plans to meet them. In some classes, learners use websites which meet their wider support needs; for example, an ESOL learner works with websites designed to improve her English. All learners have contact with LBS's student services team at induction and learners use their services and value their support.

59. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in meeting individuals' needs. Tutors have good relationships with learners and encourage an excellent classroom atmosphere. Tutors use a variety of resources to match various learning styles. Learners attain new skills and gain confidence in their use of ICT. Most sessions are adequately planned with realistic objectives and tutors in the better sessions anticipate possible difficulties and prepare materials to help learners to deal with them. Tutors give learners on beginners courses ring binders and floppy disks, which encourages good organisational skills and effectively ensures that learners take responsibility for their work.

60. Resources for learning are satisfactory. Equipment is of a good standard and is maintained well. Tutors make good use of information and learning technology. However, a range of software is available which is not used in the current teaching programme. Equipment is available to most users with special requirements. Tutors advise learners about a computer recycling scheme and many are pleased that they can buy computers cheaply for home use. Tutors' qualifications and experience are adequate. However, the accommodation and equipment in some venues is unsuitable. Some learners find learning in more public areas noisy and distracting.

61. The provision in ICT is not wide enough. Classes are for beginners and level 1 learners only. The choice of subjects is restricted to word processing, spreadsheets, databases and electronic communications, with a single class in graphics. No evening classes or weekend classes are available. Classes run at only four centres and most are held at the main centre. Very few opportunities exist for upward progression. Resources are not used intensively for classes, yet still insufficient equipment is available for independent study.

Leadership and management

62. The procedure for programme review is firmly established and very thorough. Tutors effectively evaluate individual courses as a team, and learners contribute to this evaluation through a very thorough consultation process. LBS has changed programmes as a result of learners' feedback. For example, some courses are now delivered in short modules so that learners can achieve as they progress through the programme. Tutors analyse their own enrolment, retention and achievement data and pass on findings to colleagues. Staff use regular team meetings well to exchange ideas and develop solutions to problems. A procedure for surveying early leavers helps tutors to plan improvements to the programme. The self-assessment report identified some, but not all, of the strengths and weaknesses identified during the inspection.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	380	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good improvement and maintenance of health and fitness levels for older learners
- good teaching and learning

Weaknesses

- insufficiently developed systems to record and monitor learners' health and progress
- insufficiently wide range of provision
- some poor curriculum management

Achievement and standards

63. Maintenance and improvement of health and fitness levels including cardiovascular fitness is good, particularly for older learners. Learners maintain and develop mobility, flexibility and co-ordination through a range of exercises that make good use of appropriate equipment such as soft balls and balloons. One learner said that the aquafit sessions had helped her to make a speedy recovery from a hip replacement operation. Learners in one pilates session said that they achieved increased suppleness, which helped them in their everyday lives. Tutors build mentally stimulating activities into physical exercises and, through repetition, this helps to improve learners' memories. Older learners benefit from exercising in a social setting where they feel comfortable and encouraged to learn. Learners develop good techniques in many lessons, and become increasingly aware of how their body works and what exercises they can safely do. Retention is satisfactory.

Quality of education and training

64. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are generally planned well, although not always recorded in sufficient detail. Lessons include a good range of well-paced activities to meet learners' individual needs and abilities. Tutors have a professional, friendly and sensitive approach, particularly to elderly learners. They provide clear explanations and demonstrations of exercises, carefully correct individual technique, and provide good verbal feedback that helps learners to improve. Tutors are particularly aware of the vulnerability of many learners and ensure their health and safety. Wider discussions of health and diet is incorporated well in many lessons. A fitness instructor supported by a state-registered nurse runs one health and fitness session for older learners. The nurse provides an opportunity during the session for learners to consult about health-related

SOUTHWARK LEA

topics or problems. The nurse maintains records of learners' health indicators, such as heart rate and blood pressure, and learners add their own assessment of the effects of exercise.

65. Resources are satisfactory. Some facilities used are of a good standard. For example, a local leisure centre used for various fitness and dance sessions is modern and welcoming, and has a good range and quality of facilities. Some venues are of a poor standard, with poor accessibility for those with restricted mobility. Chair exercise classes for the elderly take place in a room that is a thoroughfare for other visitors to the day centre, and which is affected by smoke from an adjoining smokers' lounge.

66. LBS has not sufficiently developed its systems to record and monitor learners' health and progress. Health screening is inconsistent. Tutors use several different systems for collecting and recording learners' initial health information, which vary in their sufficiency and consistency. Although all learners have an initial assessment plan, the form used for this is poorly designed and does not have enough space for detailed records. Tutors do not negotiate individual learning goals with learners, against which personal progress may be measured. However, tutors identify desired learning outcomes for each class and individual learners' progress against these outcomes is adequately monitored and recorded. A programme targeted at learners with identified health problems uses a good health screening form designed for use by doctors.

67. The range of provision is not wide enough. Historically the curriculum catered only for those aged over 50, but the provision is now expanding to include other age groups. Currently 66 per cent of learners are aged over 55. All courses are held during the day on weekdays only, except for the two pilates classes at levels 1 and 2 which are offered in the evening. No courses run outside of the academic year and many learners say that their fitness gains are lost, particularly during long summer breaks. Learners have insufficient opportunities to progress to more advanced courses, except for in pilates and dance. LBS does not offer enough different types of sport and fitness-related programmes, and has no links to any local sports clubs.

Leadership and management

68. No curriculum manager was in place for this curriculum area until September 2003. The newly appointed manager has inherited many historical management concerns. The manager has introduced a range of new initiatives, such as a pack for tutors which includes a range of new documentation to improve planning and monitoring of teaching and assessment. New arrangements to support tutors have been implemented and new curriculum initiatives are planned to widen participation. However, historically, much curriculum management is poor. Communications are poor and good practice is insufficiently shared. Tutors keep their own registers. Managers do not have clear, up-to-date and accurate data to base decisions on, and they are sometimes not aware of timetable changes. The manager has held only one meeting with the tutors since September. The management of resources is inadequate. Security and safety of equipment is not adequate at all venues; audio equipment at two centres has been stolen. Tutors in some classes use their own audio equipment which has not been tested

by the LEA. Staff training is inadequate. Staff work mainly in outreach centres and most do not have a current first aid qualification, or a plan for occupational updating of their skills. Staff have not been trained in equality of opportunity or risk assessments. Some classes are small, although there are waiting lists for other courses such as yoga. The gender and age profile of learners is unbalanced across the provision, but participation by minority ethnic groups is good in relation to the local population. LBS has not developed enough effective partnerships to strategically plan curriculum development of health and fitness courses across the borough. Its vetting and monitoring of partnership venues is inadequate. Health and safety is initially checked but equality of opportunity and quality assurance are not, and none are subsequently monitored. Tutors are not involved in the self-assessment process. The self-assessment report does not accurately identify the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Quality assurance systems have not rectified weaknesses and inconsistencies in practice.

Visual & performing arts & media**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	287	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good achievement of personal goals
- much good teaching and learning
- very good achievement on accredited textile crafts programmes
- very good resources for cabinet making
- good technician support

Weaknesses

- insufficient integration of literacy, numeracy and language into learning activities
- insufficient recording of learners' progress on non-accredited courses
- insufficiently wide range of courses

Achievement and standards

69. Learners achieve a very wide range of personal goals well. These include learners making clothes for grandchildren; improving their drawing skills; making soft furnishings for their own home; improving their DIY or woodworking skills; getting a better job or changing career; accessing a focused creative environment; and working with other people with similar interests. In 2002-03 all learners on accredited textile crafts courses achieved their qualifications, which included nationally recognised courses in fashion, soft furnishings, patchwork and quilting. Learners effectively develop practical skills such as hat making, cabinet making, oil painting techniques and the use of perspective in drawing. Learners in some pottery and life drawing classes produce finished work of a very good standard. In most classes, standards reached are appropriate to learners' previous experience and the level of the course. Retention and attendance are satisfactory on most courses.

Quality of education and training

70. Good teaching and learning helps many learners to make significant progress in classes. Learners understand many aspects of theory and apply these in their practical work. For instance, colour theory is used to define tonal values in one oil painting class and perspective and foreshortening are used in observational drawing and still-life studies. Well-planned sessions meet individual learners' need effectively and include a wide variety of challenging learning activities. For instance, learners make samples of a variety of different types of curtain headings and some use tone to create structure in

their artwork. Experienced tutors give skilful demonstrations supported by clear, informative explanations. Learning is supported by a comprehensive range of visual and written learning materials. These include well-structured information sheets for techniques in sewing, ceramics, woodwork and safe working practices for each machine in the wood mill shop. Tutors give helpful verbal feedback and most learners know what they need to do to improve.

71. Learners have good access to excellent resources for cabinet making and woodwork. A fully equipped suite of workshops includes a mill machine shop with industry-standard plant such as lathes, band saws, bench circular saws, router and disk sanders. Technician support in woodwork, fashion and pottery is good, and learners have very good access to practical resources and workshops outside of formal class time. This support helps learners to develop independent learning skills. Accommodation and resources in main and outreach centres are satisfactory. Art, craft and fashion rooms at the two main centres are large, well lit and adequately equipped. Tutors are suitably qualified and experienced in teaching adults, and most have teaching qualifications.

72. Tutors give learners effective levels of support, providing information about courses at other colleges or adult and community learning providers and employment opportunities. Tutors encourage learners to progress to more advanced courses if appropriate; for example, some learners on cabinet-making courses progress to the higher national diploma course at a local institute of higher education. Learners know where to go and who to ask for additional advice. Learners with mental health problems are effectively supported. Tutors work closely with partner organisations' staff to ensure that learning is an integral part of individuals' rehabilitation programmes. Learners are encouraged to progress to mainstream classes when they have enough confidence; for example, one learner now attends a pottery class at the main centre.

73. Tutors do not integrate literacy, numeracy and language development sufficiently into learning activities. Learners on accredited courses have initial assessment and when needs are identified they are given additional support, but it is not integrated with the main programme of learning activities. Tutors do not sufficiently plan the improvement of literacy, numeracy and language skills for learners on non-accredited courses.

74. Learners' progress on non-accredited courses is insufficiently recorded. Individual learning plans are not used consistently to develop learners' individual, subject-specific learning goals. Tutors give too much emphasis to making a finished product and not enough to what learners will learn and how they will improve. Tutors use skills checklists to record individual learners' progress, and do not make sufficient comments about the quality of the learner's work. Advanced learners are not sufficiently encouraged to consider their learning through self-evaluation.

75. The range of courses provided is not wide enough. Courses run only in the daytime and there is no evening or weekend provision. No drama, music or media courses are available for open enrolment. The programme of courses offered does not sufficiently reflect the cultural diversity of the borough. Not enough courses are offered in art and

craft for the extended family learning programme. Art and craft courses are provided in partnership with community organisations and charities for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities and with mental health problems.

Leadership and management

76. LBS has good partnerships with organisations such as the NHS, social services and daycare centres to provide art and craft courses for specific groups of learners. Partner organisations evaluate their programmes and this information is analysed by the co-ordinator. Actions are taken to rectify concerns identified. The provision has been significantly extended to include more visual art classes, to increase the number of courses with accreditation and to provide progression opportunities through levels of learning. Further curriculum development is planned over the next three years.

77. Tutors do not have enough opportunities to share good practice. However, some 'skills swap' sessions have resulted in two or more tutors sharing ideas about teaching and learning. Equality of opportunity is established in the working practices of tutors. Learners are aware of their rights and responsibilities and the complaints procedure.

78. Quality assurance is satisfactory. Managers carry out a rigorous annual schedule of teaching and learning observations. The quality of evaluative judgements on observation sheets has improved this year, following training for the co-ordinator. Effective monitoring of tutors' and technicians' performance includes action-planning and target-setting for quality improvement. LBS gathers learners' opinions at the end of each course. These are carefully analysed, concerns identified and actions planned. Tutors evaluate courses and the co-ordinator uses the data to compile the self-assessment report. Internal verification is carried out effectively and moderation meetings are held and records kept. The self-assessment report's findings matched most of the inspectors' findings, although some strengths listed in the report were no more than normal practice.

Foundation programmes**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	123	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good development and application of skills
- good progression onto vocational courses for ESOL learners
- well-planned and challenging teaching to meet learners' needs in most sessions
- good guidance and support for skills for life learners

Weaknesses

- some poor resources
- inadequate monitoring and assessment processes
- insufficient range of learning opportunities to meet local needs
- poor management and quality assurance of community learning project

Achievement and standards

79. Learners on foundation programmes develop and apply their skills well. Learners on skills for life programmes and in family learning acquire new skills which they apply outside the classroom; for example, learners use their skills to manage money, to complete application forms and to support their children. Learners on the community learning project use the skills they have acquired in website development to produce pages for their community centres' websites. Learners on ESOL programmes have reported growth in self-confidence and self-esteem as a result of their learning and many are progressing to mainstream provision in ICT, childcare, craft courses and further education courses. Some gain employment.

Quality of education and training

80. Tutors working in family and inclusive learning and skills for life programme plan their sessions well to challenge learners and meet their needs. A significant number of observed sessions were very good. Tutors use a range of learning activities in class. For example, in some family learning sessions, the tutor encourages learners to produce their own dual language storybooks. In other sessions, tutors use domestic materials to demonstrate how those learning to read use visual clues. Tutors set learners challenging tasks during sessions. They provide clear instructions and they use well-timed and well-paced activities. Tutors encourage learners to relate what they are learning to their own knowledge and experience, and they constantly check learners' understanding and progress. Some learners on the community learning project extend their learning outside

the class and work on developing website pages at home.

81. Skills for life tutors have a clear understanding of learners' needs which they identify through good initial assessment. The partnership between teaching staff and LBS's guidance services works well. Tutors work closely with student services staff to identify appropriate progression routes for learners on foundation programmes and learners are encouraged to use careers advice software to help them develop their long-term vocational goals. Learners on family literacy and numeracy programmes develop parenting skills which are carefully integrated with learning sessions. All learners have the opportunity of a confidential interview at key stages in their programmes. For example, a guidance worker from the borough's adult guidance services visits the final session of all family literacy and numeracy programmes. Learners can use good crèche facilities and receive support with personal matters such as housing and writing formal letters. ESOL entry-level learners do not have a translation service to help them to participate in satisfaction surveys or to help them understand their entitlements and responsibilities.

82. Some resources are poor across the area of learning. Some classrooms are cold during winter and the acoustics are poor in classes where listening and speaking skills are being taught. The lift at one centre was not working at the time of inspection. Some teaching rooms are cramped and inadequate for parents and children to learn together, and some are too small to accommodate more learners. No ICT equipment is available for ESOL learners based at the main centre.

83. Full-time and part-time staff are suitably trained in the national skills for life core curriculum, and the use of learning materials and diagnostic assessments. All have adequate teaching qualifications and are keen to develop their skills. However, agency staff and staff used by subcontractors do not have appropriate qualifications, experience or expertise for either the subject being taught or for teaching adult learners.

84. The monitoring and assessment of learning is inadequate. Tutors do not use formal initial assessment or individual learning plans across the community learning project or on family literacy and numeracy programmes. Tutors use individual learning plans in skills for life programmes, but not consistently. For example, some plans include targets and action-planning and are regularly updated, but others are not detailed enough and contain only brief comments about a learner's goals. Tutors do not use systematic processes for conducting and recording progress reviews. Although most learners have some sense of the direction they wish their learning to take, they are not able to identify the specific steps and timescales necessary for their progress and improvement.

85. The range of learning opportunities available does not meet all learners' needs. Not enough accredited family literacy and numeracy courses are provided. Most learners work towards national accreditation at level 1. However, many learners have poor literacy, numeracy and language skills and do not have the opportunity to be accredited at levels appropriate to their needs. ESOL learners cannot access computers in their classrooms. Tutors do not have the skills to provide support for ESOL learners with dyslexia. LBS does not provide evening and weekend classes in skills for life or level 2 programmes. Some courses are oversubscribed.

Leadership and management

86. Managers monitor tutors thoroughly and give them clear guidelines for teaching, assessment and progress review procedures. Good improvement plans are in place for staff and many complete the national skills for life training. Good productive partnerships support some local needs. However, staff do not meet formally and regularly to share best practice and update knowledge on national standards and development. The last recorded meeting was held in June 2003. Staff were not involved in the self-assessment process.

87. Management of the community learning project is very poor. The management of the project and its quality assurance are not linked to LBS's processes for other areas of learning. An external company carries out evaluation of the project with no reference to the 'Common Inspection Framework'. The management of the project is delegated to the subcontractor. LBS does not monitor these activities. Although there are nine project partners all with similar learning goals, no procedures or requirements are in place for partners to meet and share ideas, resources or good practice. Inspectors could not find any data or information on individual learners' goals, backgrounds or progress. LBS does not have information about the subcontractor's experience of delivering adult and community learning, or its level of knowledge of national standards for adult and community learning. The service level agreement LBS has with the subcontractor does not contain details about how training is to be delivered on the project. Project partners are not aware of clear, measurable learning outcomes of the project or how its success will be measured.

88. The management of family literacy and numeracy provision is satisfactory. The provision is well co-ordinated. However, quality assurance systems are under-developed. Learners' achievements are not clearly monitored. Strategic and development planning are in the early stages, and as yet no policy is in place to develop teaching in literacy, numeracy and language.